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gift exchange differs to some extent from the Western exchange of Christmas presents with which it is sometimes compared. In the former, as opposed to the latter system, the acquisition of desired scarce resources is a most important consideration; the fostering of social relationships is equally important in both systems.

Westerners often criticise Melanesians for being too grasping and mean in gift exchange. Absurd though this criticism may seem, it arises from a real cultural difference: Westerners depend on institutions other than gift exchange for the acquisition of desired scarce resources. Hence the institution of exchanging Christmas presents need serve no other end but the fostering of social relations. For the Melanesians, with a rudimentary market system, gift exchange must serve economic as well as social ends. This lack of differentiation leads to the necessary consequence that social exchange is rarely effective unless prestations of economic value are exchanged between the partners and both sides are satisfied with what they receive.

Orokaiva regard exchange relations as the *causa efficiens* of social relations; they cannot envisage any significant social relations in the absence of exchange relations and they ascribe all breakdowns in social relations to an antecedent breakdown in exchange relations. They support this view with cogent and sophisticated arguments, which will be presented throughout this work. Here, I shall quote only a few examples of their reasoning so as to give it some *a priori* plausibility.

One evening a women's dance practice was interrupted by an angry man calling his wife to come home. It turned out that his son's wife, who lived with the couple, had run off and returned to her village. The immediate cause of this escape was clear: he had tried to seduce her. He considered himself entirely justified in doing so as the young woman belonged to his son. To which his wife retorted that the son was hers also. The loss of the young woman, for whom bride price had been paid and whom the son would certainly expect to be reserved for him, was very serious and led to a meeting involving his clan, his wife's clan and the son's wife's clan. This meant that all of Sivepe was there, as well as a number of people from neighbouring Sasembata, the son's wife's village. A councillor was invited to adjudicate. The Sasembata people's arguments were interesting but not relevant here. The meeting was mainly concerned with what was regarded as the key problem: the conflict between the older couple. Their marriage had been unhappy for some years. The wife had been away to Port Moresby for a long time; when she returned the husband had gone away, also to Port Moresby. When he came back he found his wife was having an affair with another man. He himself was constantly chasing his three daughters-in-law.

The meeting addressed itself to the question of what had caused this marriage breakdown. The husband had been wrong to pursue his daughters-in-law; the wife had been wrong in committing adultery, and so on. But how did it begin? Why had the wife gone to Port Moresby in the first place? So she told the tale. She had had diarrhoea; her husband had become angry. But she kept on going out of the house. She then took some of his betelnuts to chew, and he told her in a fury that he did not want her to go to his garden any longer. She did not get food for a day and a half and then left for Port Moresby.

No further questions were asked. Once the husband had confirmed this

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account, the meeting ruled that the cause of the marriage breakdown was the husband's refusal to allow her to enter his garden. The attempted seduction, the adultery, the escapades to Port Moresby, the violent words and acts that had characterised the marriage over the years were all declared to be blameworthy, but the most serious of the offences was the husband's act in denying his wife entry to the taro garden. This signified the breaking off of the basic exchange relation in a marriage whereby the man clears the garden, the wife harvests the taro, and cooks it, and the husband and wife both eat it. I was told that when this exchange relation is broken, the marriage itself breaks down.

Why it is the taro garden where exchange between husband and wife is so important will be discussed in Chapter VI. I am concerned here to show that in tracing the cause of a marriage breakdown, what the Orokaiva seem to be looking for is evidence of a breakdown in the area of gift exchange. As long as the husband still gives his wife taro, there may be considerable difficulties between them, but these are not *defined* as a breakdown in Orokaiva culture unless there is a breakdown in Obligatory exchange.

Another such case was that of a man who took sides in a quarrel between his brother and another man who had been trying to rape, i.e. seduce by force, that brother's wife. I thought that the village generally would be on the brother's side, as rape is disapproved of, but almost everyone took the side of the rapist and the man who took the side of his brother had to leave the village. The man who was expelled had a long history of trouble making. During my stay he had been involved in every fight except those between husbands and wives. He had also committed rape, his victim being a prohibited partner under the incest rules. His trouble was, so I was told, that no woman wanted him. I asked my informants why this was. The reason was that he had been married previously, he had maltreated his wife and she had run away. Now nobody would help him. And why would nobody help him? Well, brideprice had been paid for his first wife; it had been lost through his fault, and that was the 'real' reason why nobody supported him in the quarrel. Here again we notice that the cause of the trouble was the breakdown of an exchange cycle. When a man has been helped in paying brideprice he has an obligation towards his clansmen to hold his wife, raise a family and be a support for the others. He must manage the relationship with his own affines properly and make them into valuable exchange partners.

In both instances a basic exchange cycle had been broken and that was thought to constitute the essence of the relationship. In the first case this was the exchange between man and woman in making their own contributions and deriving their own benefits in the taro garden – a cycle of exchange which parallels the cultivation cycle of the taro itself. In the second case it was the exchange between clansmen which is complete only when the man who received the brideprice provides recruits for the clan, as well as a steady new affinal alliance. It does not concern me here whether psychologists would, in such cases, accept the exchange breakdown as the real cause of the social breakdown; I have illustrated that the Orokaiva view social breakdowns in this manner.

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ground, and with harvesting, which he may not do. Upon marriage, the new wife is usually expected to garden on her husband's land. There is a fiction that, at the time of marriage, she 'does not know' the work she is expected to do on the land of her new affines. Her mother-in-law has to instruct her and it is only after such an apprenticeship that her husband's people consider her competent to tend taro on their land, harvest it and offer it to visitors in proper style. She would usually have been trained in these tasks by the women of her own clan, but the subtleties of family traditions differ.

As against these male and female obligations, we may note some clearcut rights: the man's right to his wife's labour and the wife's equally important right of unlimited access to the husband's garden land and to its produce. This right extends not only to harvesting food for the household, but also for gifts she may choose to make outside the household, providing that she manages the food supply so as to avoid shortages. A domestic dispute I observed in Sivepe (referred to in Chapter III above) illustrates the importance attached to this married woman's right. When this dispute was adjudicated, the 'explanation' of the breakdown of the marriage was found in a single incident, namely the husband's instruction to his wife not to go to his garden again. Here, in the view of everyone present, lay the 'root' of the trouble, a judgement with which the husband was willing to agree. This prohibition to go to his garden is one of the few things a husband is on no account to utter to his wife; it amounts to total repudiation of the conjugal relationship.

This brief discussion of social practices has already indicated that a garden plot is a gift made by a man to a woman, while the productiveness of the land is a gift from a woman to a man (because a man can neither plant nor harvest). Let us now consider to what extent the nature of these gifts may be clarified in the light of rituals, myths and indigenous explanations. It will be best to begin with some legal ideas about land. As has been pointed out by Salisbury (1962: 67ff.) among others, several sets of rights arise with respect to any one piece of land: rights of the village, of the clan, of the lineage, and of the 'father of the ground' or trustee. It is the last-mentioned person who assigns a piece of land (*enda*) to a cultivator for the purpose of making a garden (*pure*). The cultivator to whom land may be assigned may be either male or female. Among the Orokaiva it is common for women to have land assigned to them for cultivation in their own right, even though most land is assigned to males. They receive this land mostly from a father or brother, sometimes from their mother. When a woman wishes to have a garden established on her land, she (voluntarily) transfers the land to her husband or another male on a temporary basis so that he can carry out the crucial male tasks without which the garden cannot be made. These tasks are ritual as well as productive. It is common for the men of a clan to hold a feast together and to kill a pig from which they eat and obtain strength (*ivo*), before clearing new ground. The fertility of the soil depends greatly on getting a good burn after clearing, and a good burn depends on climatic conditions that can never be wholly predicted. I was unable to find out much about the ritual connected with clearing but gather it had to do with control over the sun and the rain. Another magical danger that arises in new gardens comes from the ghosts (*sovai*) lurking in the reverted gardens or bush that is being cleared. The garden thus established is the gift made by the man to the woman; the *pure* is

further such lucrative young females. Of the six, two were Sivepe women while the other four were women from other villages residing virilocally. A great many other families did not derive income in this way. Some of these, however, had daughters living in other villages, and their husbands too were sources of institutionalised gifts.

Though Waddell showed that the loss of adult male workers through migration is already serious (37.8% in Sivepe and 25% in Inonda), the point had not been reached when the loss of manpower led to a decline in the production from garden lands. Waddell may, however, be right in ascribing the increasing consumption of the inferior Xantosoma taro (see page 35 above) to the deflection of the adult male labour force which had to support old people whose vigour had declined. The older men did not stop work abruptly at a certain age; they would continue to go to their gardens, but the areas cultivated would become smaller; their children or young affines would help them. If an old man became widowed his daughter or daughter-in-law would cook food for him; in the case of a widow, uncooked food might be given, but most widows tend to live in a house where there are male relatives, the only two exceptions in the sample being the two widows who stayed in the old village of Sivepe. There are also activities which are a specialty of the old: they tend to be the village artists and also the village sorcerers. When we wanted to buy artifacts, it was the old men who made the ornaments, the old women who made the best pots and painted the best bark-cloth. Similarly, the most active curers in the village were two old men and one old woman.

I saw no evidence of polygamy currently practised. Marriages were always consecrated at the time the couple was baptised. Several people had at one time been divorced, but this was prior to the time of baptism.

In Inonda, as I wrote earlier, no absent husbands sent money home. The only woman at Inonda whose husband was away from the village was in jail, after breaking into a trade store with a hammer belonging to another man from Inonda. On the other hand, one man earned a living as a government driver, thus becoming more or less removed from the work in his subsistence and coffee gardens. Some other man took over his work, in return for appropriate counter gifts and services. In both villages, therefore, a pattern existed of outside earnings derived by a limited number of people whose garden work was taken over by other members of the village labour pool, while the money earnings were in one way or another widely shared among villagers.

Section 2: Division of Labour

The division of labour was the special subject of a study carried out in Sivepe by my predecessor, Mr. Waddell. As he has been

A [See Cat. 116--Analyst]